

Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee

19 February 2018

Present: Councillor M Thirlaway
Councillors A Austin, J Cassidy, M A Green, A Newman
and P Oliver.
Rev. M Vine Church Representative
Mrs M Ord Parent Governor Representative.

CES48/02/18 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Brooks, M Reynolds, A Waggott-Fairley and F Weetman and Mr G O'Hanlon, Church Representative.

CES49/02/18 Substitute Members

There were no substitute members reported.

CES50/02/18 Declarations of Interest

In relation to CES57/02/18, Councillor P Oliver declared a non-registerable personal interest as a member of her family had contributed to the study.

CES51/02/18 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 January 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CES52/02/18 Keeping Children and Young People in School

The sub-committee received a report from the Assistant Director for Education, Learning and Skills on the work being undertaken to ensure stability of education placement for vulnerable children and young people.

The sub-committee was informed that educational outcomes were higher if pupils remained in mainstream education or had as few transitions as possible. Movement around the education system in North Tyneside had been identified as an issue by head teachers in October 2016.

The *Keeping Children in School* workstream was established in November 2016 as part of the Children Services transformation work. There had been a strong commitment of time and resources by head teachers to address the issue which had included the commissioning of an audit of student movement around the educational system by the secondary head teachers. This audit made eleven recommendations which included conducting a review of the way behaviour was managed, improving the sharing of information, providing better support for staff in school, reviewing alternative provision and

reducing the number of decision making bodies.

The sub-committee was informed of the progress made on implementing the recommendations through the five working groups (Panels, School support team and data, alternative provision, transition, behaviour) established to do so. These Panels included head teachers across all phases and officers across Children's Services. Changes made included: a new protocol for the Fair Access panel; a redefined rationale and process for managed moves; new in-year admission forms which improved the quality of information on transition; a new North Tyneside short term student support plan to ensure schools did not use flexi school agreements; common documentation for the transition of vulnerable pupils in year and at key transition points; and amended guidance on exclusions.

In addition the roles and responsibilities of the student support team had been re-defined with their key purpose to work with schools and families at the earliest stage to prevent permanent exclusion and signpost to other professionals and a Student Support Service outreach offer from Moorbridge PRU had been developed and implemented.

Advice, resources and training had been provided to schools to help them to support more effectively the mental health of children and a closer working partnership between the school support team, special educational needs services, the education service for looked after children, education psychology service and the education and skills team meant there was a quicker response to providing the right support for schools. This included the development of guidance and training for schools on the use of de-escalation techniques; school staff were being trained on the THRIVE behaviour management approach; and a conference for schools and practitioners to share best practice in managing challenging students was being planned for April 2018.

Next steps included the completion of a behaviour policy audit; guidance information for parents/carers on in year applications to change schools in year 6, 10 and 11; an audit on how well the alternative provision offer met needs; and work was underway in partnership with Tyne Met College to improve the vocational offer to vulnerable students from September 2018 to provide meaningful opportunities for young people to be able to progress into work.

Whilst it was too early to determine the success of this work the Head teacher of the Virtual School had reported a significant increase in the stability of educational placement and higher educational outcomes for looked after children in the borough. This was pleasing and a data set to be collected to enable effective tracking of students and measuring the effectiveness of the work was in the process of being agreed.

Members sought clarification on the principles of the THRIVE technique and evidence of its impact; assurance that exclusion was still an option for schools; the time it might take to implement a managed move and what support was available for children who might have been the victim of an incident which had led to an exclusion.

The Assistant Director for Education, Learning and Skills gave an example of a school in North Tyneside where THRIVE had made a significant impact, explained the process of a managed move and assured the sub-committee that permanent exclusion was always an option for head teachers. The team always worked to understand why a situation had developed to a point that such a decision was necessary and counselling, for all children involved, was available to all schools and some schools employed their own counsellor

It was **agreed** to note the information on the *Keeping Children in School* workstream.

CES53/02/18 Education Reforms

The sub-committee received an update from the Assistant Director for Education, Learning and Skills on government proposals relating to education funding and education reforms since the briefing on National Education Policy in January 2017. Also present was Sue Graham, Finance Lead with the Council's partner Engie.

The sub-committee was informed that schools continued to work well in partnership and valued the services provided by the Authority with no schools actively seeking to convert to an Academy.

In January 2018 Damian Hinds MP had been appointed Education Secretary and announced his intention to raise education standards by supporting underperforming schools and offering young people more opportunities. Measures to achieve this included funding to successful multi academy trusts to tackle underperformance and the announcement of six new opportunity areas.

Churchill Community College had submitted a successful bid in Round 2 for £409,000 to raise achievement at Key Stage 4 by improving literacy through the development of oracy, critical thinking, and vocabulary acquisition at Key Stage 3. This funding would support nine schools in North Tyneside as well as schools in Newcastle and Northumberland and a number of bids were being prepared for Round 3.

Teacher recruitment was an issue and there had been a significant reduction in the number of applicants to the Authority's outstanding SCITT (school centred initial teacher training) and marketing and recruitment remained a priority.

Funding for schools currently came to the local authority through a ring-fenced grant called the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) which since 2013 had consisted of three blocks: the Schools Block, High Needs Block and Early Years Block. The introduction of a new national funding formula (NFF) first signalled to the sub-committee in June 2016 had progressed with the final outcome of the consultation exercise published in September 2017. This outlined the intention to move to a NFF for the allocation of the DSG with effect from 2018/19 but that local authorities had discretion to continue to set a local formula to allocate funding to individual schools within defined criteria for the years 2018/19 and 2019/20. From financial year 2020/21 the NFF would be used to allocate funding directly to schools within the Schools Block. Local authorities would continue to set funding allocations within the High Needs and Early Years blocks.

The report detailed the key changes the NFF would bring including the difference between the North Tyneside local formula factors and the NFF factors; changes to how deprivation allocation would be calculated; and the different implications for the primary and the secondary sector.

Within North Tyneside discussions have continued with schools mainly through the Schools Forum and its associated sub-groups on how the local authority should operate its local formula in 2018/19 and 2019/20. In November 2017 a consultation exercise was undertaken with all schools and the overwhelming response was for stability and consistency in the next two years to allow schools to plan for the future changes.

It was acknowledged that schools would need a lot of support to understand the implications and to plan effectively in the next two years for this considerable change. A flexible version of the local authority's three year budget planning tool had already been

sent to schools to progress their financial planning as early as possible and in advance of the formal workshop sessions planned with all schools in late February and early March 2018. The Head of Finance was keen to have early discussions with any schools with a predicted worsening financial outlook in order to ensure that schools were supported to take all reasonable steps to improve their position.

The report also included information on the effectiveness of pupil premium funding; tools to support schools to improve their financial health; and how to improve and maintain the school estate. Four new build projects had been completed in 2016/17 at Longbenton High, John Spence Community High, Marden High and Whitehouse Primary schools. A significant refurbishment for Cullercoats Primary was in the planning stage.

Members sought clarification on how funding for teaching and school staff was calculated; the work being undertaken with schools currently in deficit; whether capital could be used to make up shortfalls and how funding for building improvements was allocated. The importance of keeping ward councillors informed of the financial position of their local schools was emphasised to ensure they were prepared when issues began to be raised by parents at their ward surgeries.

The Chair thanked the officers for their presentation and attendance at the meeting.

It was **agreed** to note the information on education reforms and education funding.

[At the end of the discussion on this matter Mrs M Ord left the meeting room.]

CES54/02/18 Attainment of Children Who Are Looked After

The sub-committee received a report on the educational outcomes and progress of the children in the care of North Tyneside Council.

Jane Pickthall, the Head of the Virtual School, attended the meeting to present the report to the sub-committee.

As Corporate Parents all Members had a statutory duty to promote the educational outcomes of looked after children. As of April 2018 this duty would extend to include previously looked after children who had achieved permanence through adoption, special guardianship or a child arrangements order.

The health and education of the Authority's looked after children was closely monitored with robust monitoring systems in place to ensure educational progress each term was on track. This enabled the Authority to evaluate the impact of Pupil Premium Plus and identify pupils that needed additional support. The North Tyneside looked after population had a high proportion of children with special educational needs and for some pupils more specialist provision was required. The RHELAC (Raising the Health and Education of Looked After Children) team's focus was on ensuring pupils were assessed fully and their needs understood, which was why additional capacity from the educational psychologists had been secured.

The Pupil Premium Plus Policy gave schools an initial payment each term, with further funding available for crisis situations and individual requests for tuition, ICT equipment and school trips. A proportion of the funding was used to enhance the offer from The Virtual School and in addition to the team's English teacher and primary teacher, there was now

two part-time maths teachers, an apprentice teaching assistant, a counsellor and additional educational psychology time. This had enabled more targeted support to be provided according to each pupil's needs.

Research carried out by The Rees Centre, Oxford University had identified a range of factors that impacted most on the educational outcomes of looked after children. These included: stability of placement and school; good mental health; SEN; and remaining in mainstream provision, where appropriate. The *Keeping Children in School* work detailed earlier had seen a year on year increase in the number of Year 11 pupils completing their GCSEs in mainstream schools.

The report included statistics on attainment from Key Stage Two (KS2) and Key Stage Four (KS4) with comparative data for all pupils in North Tyneside.

The performance at KS2 was strong with the gap between looked after children and their peers significantly improving. Whilst it was hard to do year on year comparisons due to the variations in the needs of each cohort, the team was confident that all pupils performed to the best of their ability. Many of the cohort received direct academic support from the Virtual School, experienced settled placements and had schools that had high expectations of them. The combination of all these factors helped the children make accelerated progress and meet their age related expectations. Although the numbers were statistically insignificant, when the attainment of looked after children without SEN (special educational needs) was compared against non-looked after children without SEN the gap virtually disappeared. The progress report at KS2 also showed the impact of the support that looked after children were given as looked after children made more progress than their non-looked after peers.

At KS4 around 30% of the cohort achieved English L4+ or Maths 4+ but only 14% achieved both. The gap between the overall attainment of looked after children and non-looked after children was 26.9% and the gap for progress was 17.2%. It was not possible to remove the children with SEN from these statistics. This year there had been a considerable amount of instability around care placements for a number of looked after children in Year 11 which had an impact on their outcomes. Many of this cohort had entered care during Year 10, making it hard to have a significant impact on filling gaps in knowledge prior to entering care. However it should be noted that the attendance record of the looked after children cohort was better than non-looked after children in KS4.

Members sought clarification on what work with school staff, foster carers and residential assistants was taking place to try and reduce the gap at KS4. Members were assured that most looked after children had their own laptops and the residential homes had homework rooms with computers.

The Chair thanked Mrs Pickthall for her presentation and attendance at the meeting.

It was **agreed** to note the information on the attainment of children who were looked after by the Authority.

CES55/02/18 0-19 Children's Public Health Service (Health Visiting and School Nursing)

On 1 April 2017 the services for 0-19 Children's Public Health Service (health visiting and school nursing) transferred from Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to the

Authority. The sub-committee received information on how the transfer of responsibilities had been implemented and the work of the service since. Heidi Douglas, a Consultant in Public Health and Veronica Hetherington, the 0-19 Children's Public Health Service Matron/Area Lead attended the meeting to present the report and answer any questions.

The sub-committee was informed that the transfer had followed TUPE requirements and had been successfully led by the Director of Public Health with 84 staff, comprising managers, health visitors, school nurses, staff nurses, nursery nurses, a midwife, assistants and administrative staff transferred to the Authority. The transfer progressed well and robust plans ensured that key partners and staff were fully engaged and maintained continuity of care for families and children.

The 0-19 Children's Public Health Service aimed to promote and protect the health and wellbeing of children, young people and their families from the antenatal period through to age 19 and to address inequalities in outcome. Fundamental to the aim of the Service was universal access to the Healthy Child Programme (HCP) and early identification of additional and/or complex needs. The service was led and managed by the Senior Manager and Clinical Lead accountable to the Director of Public Health. The service had integrated within the Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding service of the Authority and worked alongside Early Help and Vulnerable Families Teams with staff based within the four 0-19 locality teams. It was important to note that the service did not provide district nursing or address individual clinical needs of individual children and young adults.

As a provider of community health services the Authority was registered with the Care Quality Commission and the registered manager of the service was the Director of Public Health. The 0-19 Children's Public Health Service Governance Board met on a monthly basis to ensure that North Tyneside Council had effective policies and management arrangements covering all aspects of Governance and to scrutinise and review its systems under the following headings:

- Vision and Service Scope
- Leadership/Management Accountability
- Clinical Governance (7 Pillars)
- Risk Management
- Information and Systems Governance
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Performance
- CQC Requirements

A number of key developments had taken place within the service since the transfer which included: the development of a bespoke incident reporting scheme; the relocation of well baby clinics to accessible local authority venues; preparation for re accreditation of Baby Friendly Initiative to promote breast feeding across the borough; the integration of the service within the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and a Health and Safety Audit. There had been good examples of improved integration and multidisciplinary working with housing, sport and leisure and children's services and there had been the successful recruitment of new staff including health visitors, staff nurses and midwives.

The Director of Public Health was notified in December that a two day announced 'short' Care Quality Commission inspection would take place on 6 and 7 March 2018. Preparations for inspection had been in place since the transfer of the service which had included an early meeting with the lead inspector; the completion of a self-assessment and

development of an improvement plan; and the convening of a working group to prepare and develop a project plan. Lead Members, Senior Leadership Team and staff had all been briefed and weekly preparation meetings were taking place.

In response to questions it was clarified that external scrutiny of the service was provided by the CQC and that the NHS pensions accrued by the staff previously employed by the NHS remained in place. Questions were asked and responded to regarding the work to tackle childhood obesity in the borough, children's tooth decay and the changes to the work of 'school nurses'.

The Chair thanked the Consultant in Public Health and the 0-19 Children's Public Health Service Matron/Area Lead for their presentation and attendance at the meeting.

It was **agreed** to note the information on the role and services provided by the 0-19 Children's Public Health Service.

CES56/02/18 Transforming Children's Services

At the meeting held on 19 September 2017 the sub-committee agreed that future reports on Transforming Children's Services would be a 'Red-Amber-Green' rated short summary of progress to date.

The Transforming Children's Services programme brought together a wide range of projects that were aimed at transforming the way children's services operated by increasing its ability to manage demand and, as a result, manage its resources in the most effective way whilst ensuring good outcomes for children, young people and families was maintained.

The work was arranged under five work streams, with a small number of projects grouped underneath each one. The five work streams were:

1. Keeping children, young people safe at home
2. Keeping children and young people in school
3. Looking after children and young people safely
4. Enabling Projects
5. Innovation and New Models.

The title of the projects underpinning the work streams were: Menu of Options; Dartington; Children with Disabilities; 5Q Model for Going Home; Mitford Gardens; Fostering; Elm House; Signs of Safety; Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub; Children and Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing; Liquid Logic; Social Impact Bonds; and Regional Adoption Agency.

Of the thirteen projects: four had been fully implemented and rated as green; seven were amber; and one was red. The Social Impact Bonds project was finished but not categorised as green because a decision had been taken not to progress with the project because of the financial risk involved.

The Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) was the red rated project. This project responded to a national government directive to establish regional delivery arrangements for the management of adoption placements by 2020. This involved working with the five regional local authority partners to assess the most appropriate vehicle for the RAA. A business case had been received and was being considered to ensure that any changes the

Authority made were safe and did not place it at risk. The work was red rated because the original timescale to have it established would not be met. The sub-committee was reassured that there was no risk to the existing adoption services.

It was noted that the RAA was a project that might benefit from having a more in-depth examination by the sub-committee at a future date.

It was **agreed** to note the information on the progress made in implementing the projects in the Transforming Children's Services programme.

CES57/02/18 Transition from Children to Adult Services Sub Group Report

The sub-committee received a report from the Transition Sub Group on the Transition Process for Young People with SEND (special educational needs and/or a disability) from Children to Adult Services in North Tyneside. The sub-committee was requested to endorse the report and its recommendations and agree for it to be submitted to the next meeting of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee to request they approve the report for submission to Cabinet.

The sub group had been established in January 2017 with the intention of finding any gaps in provision or knowledge or processes which could disrupt a smooth transition and cause the experience for the young person and their families to be an unhappy one and then make recommendations to improve the experience. The sub group had met on a number of occasions to receive information and discuss their findings and also met with officers from the local authority. To gain an understanding of the services available in the borough the sub group also met with parents, representatives from the Clinical Commissioning Group and sought the opinion of young people who had been through the process.

The report included eleven recommendations to facilitate and progress improvements to the delivery of the service and the experience for the service users. Moving towards adulthood was an exciting time of new opportunities, new choices and increasing independence for all young people, whether they had additional support needs, or not and the sub group endorsed the service's message that "We want all young people with special educational needs and disabilities in North Tyneside to have the opportunities to live the life to which they aspire" and believed that the recommendations would go towards making this goal a reality.

The Chair, who had also served on the sub group, thanked Councillors J Cassidy, J O'Shea, J Wallace and the Rev. M Vine for their work.

It was **agreed** to endorse the report and its recommendations and approve its submission to Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee on 5 March 2018.